(b) whether the rolling stock become eligible to operate, after issuance of the Interim Speed Certificate, with some restrictions; and

(c) if so, why the newly imported 140 T crane stationed at New Jalpaiguri could not be put into rescue operations at Gaisal accident on 2nd August, 1999?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) There is no such term in vogue as 'Interim Speed Certificate'. However, Provisional Speed Certificate is issued by the Motive Power Directorate of Research Designs and Standard Organisation (RD. SO.),Lucknow for any new type of rolling stock. This speed is ascertained based on the design features of the new stock after comparing it with similar stock already in service, duly consulting other Directorates of RD.SO. The provisional certificate stipulates the maximum speed up to which the new rolling stock can be run, till such time field trials are conducted and final speed certificates are issued. The Provisional Speed Certificate granted by RD. SO. is, therefore, only a recommendation in regard to the maximum speed at which a rolling stock can be permitted to run on a specified track structure under average/stipulated maintenance conditions and bridges built to specified standards till such time the final speed certificate is issued.

(b) The Provisional Speed Certificate is only a guideline issued by RD.SO. to the Zonal Railway On the basis of this Certificate depending upon track and other conditions each Railway is required to process sanction to operate the rolling stock through the Commissioner of Railway Safety.

(c) The newly imported 140 Tonne crane stationed at New Jalpaiguri had been commissioned just 4 days before the occurrence of Gaisal accident. The operating staff was not fully familiar with the newly received crane. Further final approval from the Commissioner of Railway Safety was yet to be obtained. It is however, pointed out that adequate number of breakdown cranes located in the vicinity of Gaisal were madeavailable for relief and rescue operations.

**Unmanned Level Crossing in Karnataka**

2101. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of unmanned level crossings in Karnataka; and

(b) what steps have been taken to prevent accidental deaths on these crossings?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) At present, there are 946 'C class unmanned level crossings in Karnataka. Railway Zone-wise details are as under:

| RAILWAYS | NUMBER OF UNMANNED LEVEL CROSSINGS |
|---|---|
| Southern | 582 |
| South Central | 364 |

(b) The important steps taken by the Government to prevent accidents at unmanned level crossing are listed below :—

1. On the road approaches, "Stop Boards" are provided on either side of the level crossings at suitable points within the railway boundary to warn the road users.

2. Speed breakers/rumble strips have been provided on road approaches to level crossing so that road vehicle drivers reduce their speed.

3. Whistle Board are provided on rail approach to level crossings for train drivers to whistle from the whistle board till such time as the train passes the level crossing gate.

4. Education of road drivers about safety at unmanned level crossings by publicity campaigns through media like quickies on TV, cinema slides, posters, talks on radio, newspaper advertisements and street plays.

5. Chief Secretaries of States have been requested to help in educating road users about safety precautions at level crossings and for exercising strict checks while issuing driving licences.

6. Joint Ambush Checks with civil authorities are conducted to nab errant road vehicle drivers under the provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act. 1988 and the Railways Act, 1989.

7. Involvement of Village Panchayats in the railways public awareness programmes.

8. Putting up level crossing safety posters at Village Panchayat Offices and at retail petrol pumps.

9. Trials are underway for user operated hydraulic gates at unmanned

level crossings.

10. The unmanned level crossings are progressively being manned in a phased manner. Although the initial cost of manning of unmanned Level Crossings, has to be borne by the Road authority concerned and annual operating & maintenance cost is to be borne by the Railway, considering the serious consequences of the accidents at unmanned Level Crossings, Railway has decided to man 4449 hazardous level crossings at its own cost in a period of 5 years.

Railways have also decided to man equal number of Level Crossing at its own cost as are manned through funds from MPLADS as per the recommendations of Hon'ble MPs.

**Ongoing Railway Projects in Assam**

2102. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the present position of various ongoing railway projects in Assam; and

(b) the details of targets achieved in this regard, so far ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) and (b) The information is given as under :—

**Ongoing Railway Projects in Assam**

| S.No. | Project | Kms | Status |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| New line | | | |
| 1 | Dudhnoi-Depa | 155 | Work on this project would be taken up only after the land becomes available and will be completed within 2 years of land being made available. |
| 2. | Harmuti-Itangar | 22 | This work has been frozen. Survey for an alternative alignment at the request of State Govt, from Bcdati to Itanagar (45 km) has been sanctioned. |
| 3. | Diphu-Karong | 123 | This work has been temporarily pended since Govt, of Manipur has suggested to have Jiribam-Imphal as an alternative alignment to this work. Survey for new alignment has been included in the Budget 2001-02. |